

REMARKS

Claims 1-34 are pending in this application. Editorial revisions have been made to claims 23, 25, and 27. Applicants thank Examiner for indicating that claims 7-9, 14-21, and 26-31 are allowable. In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reexamination and allowance of claims 1-6, 10-13, 22-25, and 32-34.

Objections to the Drawings

Formal objections have been made to the drawings filed on February 1, 2000. In response, Applicants now submit formal drawings attached to this paper. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request that the formal drawings be accepted.

Objections to the Specification

Editorial revisions have been made to the specification per the Examiner's request. In particular, the number "40" on page 7, line 20 has been changed to "36." No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request that the formal objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Objections to the Claims

Formal objections have been made to claims 25 and 27. In particular, claim 25 was objected to for lack of antecedent basis of the term "the channels" in line 4. Claim 27 was objected to for lack of antecedent basis for the term "the base." The Examiner's comments have been considered and appropriate correction has been made. Claim 25 has been amended to recite the "mounting channels" in line 4 and claim 27 has been amended to recite "the base of the connector holder" in line 2. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 25 and 27 are now in condition for allowance.

Rejections to the Claims

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner requested clarification as to the location of the resilient cantilevers. The resilient cantilevers recited in claim 16 are referenced as item number 138 in Figure 7. The

specification discusses these resilient cantilevers on *e.g.* page 11, lines 1-5 as projecting upward from the base of the housing. Applicants respectfully request reexamination and allowance of claim 16.

Claims 22-25 and 32-34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Robinson et al.* (U.S. 5,781,686, hereinafter "*Robinson*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 22 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing having a peripheral wall. The peripheral wall includes a first portion defining an elongated connector access opening and a second portion being configured to extend about the remaining periphery of the housing. The outlet box further includes a connector holder connected to the housing and positioned adjacent to the connector access opening and at least four break-outs provided on the second portion of the peripheral wall. Each break-out is adapted to form an opening in the peripheral wall that faces outward from the housing. The second portion of the peripheral wall is configured such that the break-outs face in at least four different directions.

Robinson fails to disclose an outlet box including break-outs facing outward in at least four different directions from the second portion of the peripheral wall. *Robinson* discloses breakout raceway openings 40 facing in only three directions. *See* Fig. 1. In particular, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box having a peripheral wall with four sides, each side facing in a different direction. One of these sides defines multiple connector module openings. *See e.g.*, col. 8, lines 3-33, and Fig. 1, item numbers 86, 88, 90. Breakout raceway openings 40 are provided in each of the three remaining sides. No motivation is provided in *Robinson* to add another side to the peripheral wall or to add breakout raceway openings 40 to the connector holder side. Therefore, *Robinson* does not provide motivation for adding a break-out facing in a fourth direction in addition to the three disclosed raceway openings 40. For at least these reasons, *Robinson* does not anticipate or make obvious claim 22.

Claim 23 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing having an elongated connector access opening. The housing also includes a base positioned perpendicular relative to the connector access opening. One example of a connector access opening can be seen in Fig. 1, item number 40. The base of the housing defines an elongated mounting opening positioned

next to the connector access opening. Examples of an elongated mounting opening can be seen in Fig. 1, item numbers 82 and 84. The outlet box further includes a connector holder (*see e.g.*, Fig. 1, item number 36) for holding multiple telecommunications connectors. The connector holder includes a base shaped to fit the mounting opening in the base of the housing such that the connector holder can be mounted to the housing.

In contrast, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box including a connector holder forming part of a peripheral wall of a housing of the outlet box. The housing includes a connector access opening and an elongated mounting opening. However, *Robinson* fails to disclose or suggest the connector access opening being positioned perpendicular relative to the elongated mounting opening. Rather, the connector access opening is coplanar with the elongated mounting opening. *See e.g.*, col. 12, lines 25-30 and Fig. 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, *Robinson* does not anticipate or make obvious claim 23. Claims 24 and 25 depend from claim 23 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 32 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing, means for mounting a connector holder at a first location in the housing, and means for mounting the connector holder at a second location in the housing. The first location is adjacent to a connector access opening defined in the housing. The second location is recessed within the housing relative to the first location. The connector holder can be mounted at either the first or second location. Compare the position of the connector holder in Figures 2 and 5 (showing the connector holder mounted at the first location) with the position of the connector holder in Figure 11 (showing the connector holder mounted at the second location). Mounting the connector holder at the second, recessed location affords greater protection to the connectors. *See e.g.*, page 8, lines 24-26.

Robinson fails to disclose or suggest an outlet box including a housing having a second location for mounting a connector holder that is recessed within the housing relative to a first location for mounting a connector holder. Rather, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box including a mounting frame for mounting multiple modules. The modules are mounted side-by-side in the mounting frame. *See e.g.*, column 5, lines 25-37 and Figs. 1 and 3. No motivation is given in *Robinson* for mounting a connector holder at a recessed location in the housing. For at least these reasons, *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 32

Claim 33 recites, in part, a method for assembling an outlet box including a housing, which includes a first and second connector mounting location. The second connector mounting location is recessed within the housing relative to the first connector mounting location. The method includes selecting one of the first and second mounting locations and mounting a connector holder to the selected location. Therefore, for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 32, *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 33.

Claim 34 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing defining a connector access opening and a connector holder. The outlet box further includes a first and second connector holder mount. The second connector holder mount is positioned at a second location in the housing recessed relative to a first location. The connector holder can be mounted to either of these connector holder mounts. Therefore, for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 32, *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 34.

Claims 1-6, 12, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over *Robinson* in view of *Prazoff* (U.S. 6,077,109, hereinafter "*Prazoff*"). Applicants note that the citation of *Lyons* (see page 6 of the Office Action) appears to be a typographical error since the rejection goes on to discuss the *Prazoff* reference. Therefore, for the purposes of this response, Applicants have assumed that the Examiner intended to reject the claims over *Robinson* in view of *Prazoff*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing and a connector holder. The housing includes a first side positioned opposite from a second side. The housing further includes a peripheral wall extending between the first and second sides and having a first portion and a second portion, each portion having an outer face. The outer face of the first portion defines a connector access opening and extends between first and second edges of the housing. The outer face of the second portion, which is separate from the outer face of the first portion, is configured to curve continuously about a periphery of the housing from the first edge to the second edge.

As noted by the Examiner, *Robinson* fails to disclose or suggest a second outer face of a peripheral wall being shaped to curve continuously about a periphery of a housing. The rejection cites *Prazoff* as disclosing a peripheral wall shaped to curve continuously about a periphery of

the housing. However, *Prazoff* does not suggest a peripheral wall being broken into a first portion and a second portion, with only the second portion curving continuously. Rather the entire peripheral wall in *Prazoff* is configured to curve continuously. Furthermore, *Prazoff* fails to disclose or suggest any motivation for breaking the continuity of the peripheral wall. The connector holder disclosed in *Prazoff* is located on one of the sides of the housing and not on the peripheral wall. Moreover, the reasons found in *Prazoff* for configuring the peripheral wall to curve continuously do not exist in *Robinson*. The peripheral wall of the extension socket body in *Prazoff* is curved so as to allow an electrical plug to be wound up following the shape of the housing. In contrast, *Robinson* includes fiber optic cable, which is wound around storage rings, and which does not follow the shape of the housing.

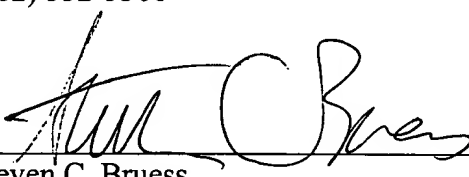
In addition, *Prazoff* cannot be combined with *Robinson* because it is not an analogous art. *Robinson* refers to a housing for telecommunication cables and multimedia connector members. *Prazoff*, on the other hand, is directed to an extension socket and housing for a corresponding electrical plug. A person having skill in the telecommunications art will not look to a patent regarding power strips when designing a telecommunications housing. Therefore, for at least these reasons, *Robinson* would not lead a person having skill in the art to the invention of claim 1, even in view of *Prazoff*. Claims 2-6, 12, and 13 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

Date: June 29, 2005



Steven C. Bruess
Reg. No. 34,130
SCB/JKS/jt

Amendments to the Drawings:

Twenty-four (24) sheets of formal drawings are attached to the Appendix of this paper, replacing the twenty-four sheets of informal drawings. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully request that the formal drawings be accepted.